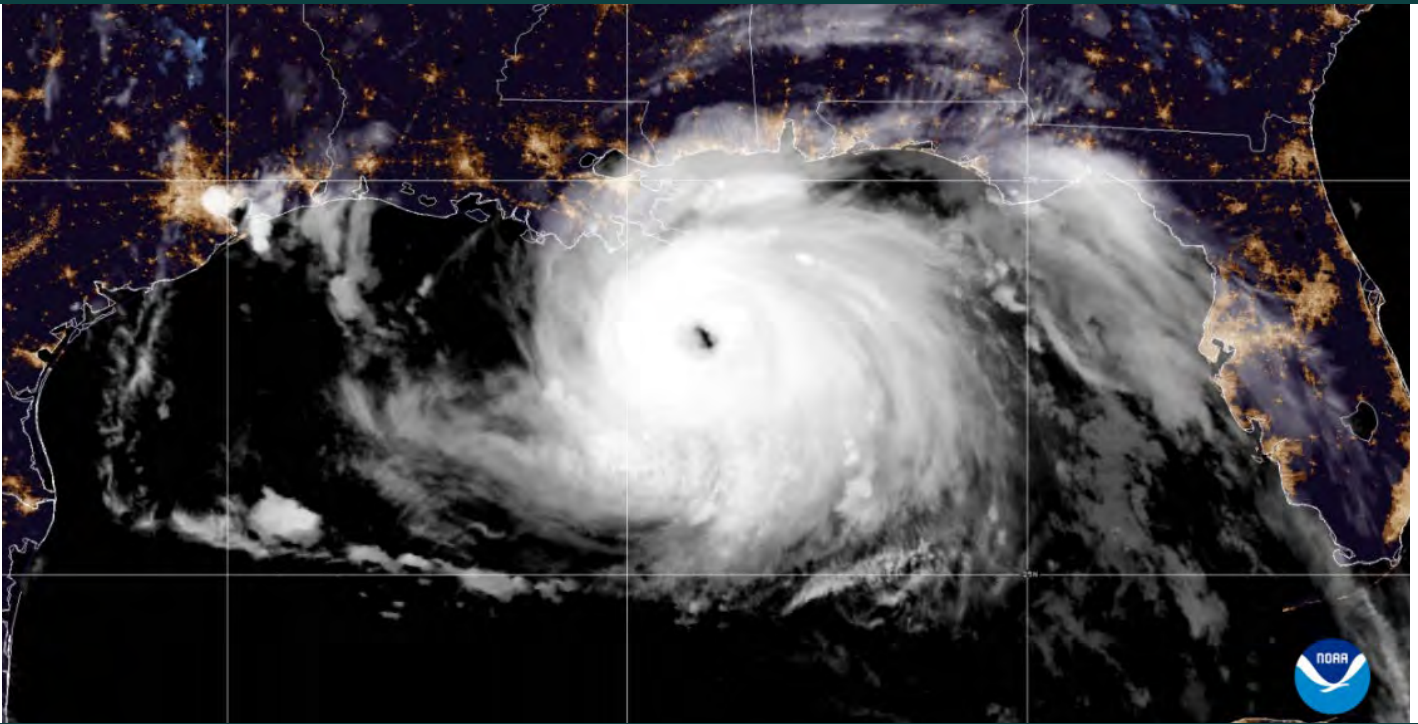


LOUISIANA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT NEWSLETTER



Community Emergency Preparedness

As we enter into the 2023 hurricane season, communities should take a look at their emergency management plans. It is important to remember that emergency management is a continuous process, not an event that must be maintained between crises. Living in a Gulf Coast state, we tend to focus on hurricane preparedness, but floods, tornados, chemical spills and pandemics are events that we must concern ourselves with as well.

Emergency management deals with how to respond to disaster, mitigate the damage, recover from the negative effects and better prepare for the next possible event. Natural disasters and manmade events require quick and accurate response. Emergency management is a key concern for community and economic development because it plays into safety and security issues, quality of life and community improvement.

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When preparing an emergency management plan, we must remember that emergency management is a process, not an event, and it is continuous. A disaster will create action, but action must be prefaced by planning. The difficult responsibility for local emergency management personnel is to maintain public vigilance between crises. If local governments are to succeed, they must purposefully court community support and involvement.



The continuous nature of the emergency management process necessitates that emergency management leadership provide guidance and support at all critical junctures. The National Incident Management System, as approved by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, oversees the Incident Command System framework that is widely used for inter-agency coordination in emergency situations. Familiarity with these systems is critical in all levels of the emergency management network.

There are four phases of emergency management:

- **Mitigation** – actions taken that prevent an emergency or lessen its effect.
- **Preparedness** – plans/preparation designed to save lives in an emergency.
- **Response** – any actions taken that are apt to save life and property.
- **Recovery** – actions taken to bring back a sense of normalcy to citizens' lives.

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Emergency management planning must cover all four phases and should be tied to the goals and objectives of your community's strategic plan. There are several community resources that you will need to utilize:

- **Information** – a vital resource for everyone in the community, provided by your Public Information Officer.
- **People** – emergency management personnel integrated with community leaders.
- **Money** – stay on the lookout for grants, startup money or other additional revenue sources.
- **Buildings and land** – look for donations for each of these types of resources.
- **Equipment** – remember, equipment has a life cycle; therefore, plan accordingly.



When working in emergency management, stay vigilant and remain steadfast in your preparation. Make a plan and work it, but don't be surprised if the plan changes within the first few minutes of an emergency; flexibility is an asset. Train with the plan, but also add scenarios that cause you to readjust the plan. Plan the exercise and exercise the plan.

For more details on how to put a marketing plan together please visit www.LouisianaCommunityNetwork.org under the Community Development Toolkit on LED's web page. We encourage you to discuss writing a marketing plan with all groups that are working to sell your community.

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